

Iowa Balance of State Continuum of Care Governance Charter

Overview

Background - Continuum of Care Structure under [S. 896 HEARTH Act of 2009](#) ([24 CFR 578](#))

The Continuum of Care (CoC) is the group composed of representatives of relevant organizations that are organized to plan for and provide, as necessary, a system of outreach, engagement, and assessment; emergency shelter; rapid re-housing; transitional housing; permanent housing; and prevention strategies to address the various needs of homeless or at risk of homelessness persons for a specific geographic area. This group serves as the recognized decision making body for the wider Continuum of Care jurisdiction.

Organization

Name: The name of the governing body for homeless service planning for the State of Iowa is the Iowa Council on Homelessness (hereinafter referred to as the “Iowa Council”). This organization was established in [Iowa Code 16.00A](#) in 2008. One of the primary functions of the Iowa Council is to serve as the decision making body for the Iowa Balance of State Continuum of Care.

Purpose

The Iowa Council serves as the HUD designated primary decision making group and oversight board of the Iowa Balance of State (hereinafter referred to as the “geographic area”) Continuum of Care for the Homeless (IA-501).

As the oversight board of the CoC, the Iowa Council and its members:

1. Ensure that the CoC is meeting all of the responsibilities assigned to it by HUD regulations (see below);
2. Represent the relevant organizations and projects serving homeless subpopulations; Support persons experiencing homelessness in their movement from homelessness to economic stability and affordable permanent housing within a supportive community;
3. Ensure that the CoC is inclusive of all needs of the Iowa Balance of State’s homeless population, including the special service and housing needs of homeless subpopulations;
4. Facilitate responses to issues and concerns that affect the agencies funded by the CoC that are beyond those addressed in the annual CoC application process.

Responsibilities (per Federal Interim Rule 24 CFR 578)

As the designated board of the CoC for the geographic area, the Iowa Council works with the CoC Collaborative Applicant (Iowa Finance Authority) to fulfill three major duties:

1. ***Operate the CoC***, which must;
 - i. Hold meetings of the full membership, with published agendas, at least semi-annually;
 - ii. Make an invitation for new members to join publicly available within the geographic area at least annually;
 - iii. Adopt and follow a written process to select Iowa Council members to act on behalf of the CoC. The process must be reviewed, updated, and approved by the CoC membership at least once every 5 years;
 - iv. Appoint committees, subcommittees, or workgroups as may be deemed necessary;
 - v. In consultation with the CoC Collaborative Applicant and the HMIS Lead, develop, follow, and update annually a governance charter, which will include all procedures and policies needed to comply with CoC requirements as prescribed by HUD; and a code of conduct and recusal process for the Iowa Council, its chair(s), and any person acting on behalf of the council;
 - vi. Consult with recipients and sub recipients of CoC funding to establish performance targets appropriate for population and program type, monitor recipient and sub recipient performance, evaluate outcomes, and take action against poor performers;
 - vii. Evaluate outcomes of projects funded under the Iowa Balance of State Emergency Solutions Grants program (hereinafter referred to as “ESG”) and the CoC program, and report to HUD;
 - viii. In consultation with the Collaborative Applicant, the HMIS Lead, and recipients of ESG funds, establish and operate a centralized or coordinated assessment system that provides an initial, comprehensive assessment of the needs of individuals and families for housing and services.
 - ix. In consultation with recipients of ESG funds within the geographic area, establish and consistently follow written standards for providing assistance. At a minimum, these written standards must include:
 - 1) Policies and procedures for evaluating individuals’ and families’ eligibility for CoC assistance;
 - 2) Policies and procedures for determining and prioritizing which eligible individuals and families will receive transitional housing assistance;
 - 3) Standards for determining what percentage or amount of rent each program participant must pay while receiving rapid rehousing assistance;
 - 4) Policies and procedures for determining and prioritizing which eligible individuals and families will receive permanent supportive housing assistance; and
 - 5) When the CoC is designated a high-performing community, policies and procedures for determining and prioritizing which eligible individuals and families will receive Homelessness Prevention Assistance.
2. ***Designate and oversee a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)***:
 - i. Designate a single HMIS for the geographic area;
 - ii. Designate an eligible applicant to manage the CoC’s HMIS, which will be known as the HMIS Lead;
 - iii. Review, revise, and approve a privacy plan, security plan, and data quality plan for

- the HMIS.
- iv. Ensure consistent participation of recipients and sub recipients of CoC and ESG funding in the HMIS;
- v. Ensure the HMIS is administered in compliance with requirements prescribed by HUD.
- 3. ***Continuum of Care Planning:*** The CoC must develop a plan that includes:
 - i. Coordinating the implementation of a housing and service system within its geographic area that meets the needs of the homeless individuals (including unaccompanied youth) and families. At a minimum, such system will encompass the following:
 - 1) Outreach, engagement, and assessment;
 - 2) Shelter, housing, and supportive services;
 - 3) Prevention strategies.
 - ii. Planning for and conducting, at least biennially, a point-in-time count of homeless persons within the geographic area that meets the following requirements:
 - 1) Homeless persons who are living in a place not designed or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans must be counted as unsheltered homeless persons.
 - 2) Persons living in emergency shelters and transitional housing projects must be counted as sheltered homeless persons.
 - 3) Annual Housing Inventory Count
 - 4) Other requirements established by HUD by Notice.
 - iii. Conducting an annual gaps analysis of the homeless needs and services available within the geographic area;
 - iv. Providing information required to complete the Consolidated Plan(s) within the CoC's geographic area; Consulting with state and local government ESG program recipients for allocating ESG funds and reporting on and evaluating the performance of ESG recipients and sub recipients.

CoC Membership

The membership of the Continuum of Care is defined as those persons and organizations participating in the work of the CoC through committee or workgroup service, planning, other relevant stakeholders; or those who are experiencing homelessness. (24CFR Subpart B 578.5) The powers of the Council are vested in and exercised by 38 voting members appointed by the governor in accordance with Iowa Code section 16.100A.

Iowa Council Membership Process

Twelve (12) members are appointed by the Governor to represent each of the relevant state departments. Twenty six (26) members from the general public may apply for Council membership through the Governor's office. Five of the twenty six members will be individuals who are homeless or formerly homeless. One of the twenty six shall represent the Iowa State Association of Counties, and one of the twenty six shall represent the Iowa League of Cities. Once approved by the Governor, and confirmed by the Iowa Council, the

voting members selected from the general public shall each serve a two-year term. Terms shall be staggered so half of the voting members are appointed in one year and half are appointed in the year thereafter.

The council shall, as soon as all members have been appointed, promptly elect a chairperson and a vice chairperson, both to a term not to exceed two years ending in May. The chairperson and vice chairperson shall not both be either general public members or agency director members. The chairperson shall rotate between agency director members and general public members. (Iowa Code 16.00A)

As stated on page three (3), under “CoC Membership”, the composition of the Iowa Council through both public and private sector appointments will be consistent with the direction of Federal law through the S. 896 HEARTH Act of 2009 (24 CFR 578).*

****Please reference Amendment One of this document, to find the current membership of the Iowa Council on Homelessness, with their respective organizational constituencies.***

Meeting Frequency/Structure

Regular meetings of the Iowa Council shall be held on the third Friday of the following months: January, March, May, July, September, and November, unless another time of meeting is designated by the council. Meetings may also be held at the call of the chairperson or whenever a majority of the members so request. The council shall comply with the open meetings and records requirements of Iowa Code Chapters [21](#) and [22](#). Interested parties are encouraged to attend and participate in Iowa Council meetings where feasible.

Decision Making Quorum:

A majority of the Iowa Council members shall constitute a quorum at all meetings thereof. Any action taken by the Iowa Council must be adopted by an affirmative vote of a majority of its membership.

Conflict of Interest

[\(Iowa Code 68B.2A\)](#)

Any individual participating in or influencing decision making must identify actual or perceived conflicts of interest as they arise and comply with the letter and spirit of this policy.

Disclosure should occur at the earliest possible time and if possible, prior to the discussion of any such issue.

Individuals with a conflict of interest should abstain from voting on any issue in which they may have a conflict.

An individual with a conflict of interest, who is the committee chair, shall yield that position during discussion and abstain from voting on the item.

Annual written disclosure statements will be provided by each council member at the commencement of their term and at the time of renewal of their term.

Members will not be permitted to participate until the statement is on file at Iowa Finance

Authority.

The Iowa Council will also strictly adhere to the conflict of interest regulatory requirements of the Federal Continuum of Care Program – 24 CFR 578.95

Iowa Council Committee Structure

Standing Committees

The standing committees of the Council are the following: Executive Committee, Nominating Committee, Research and Analysis Committee, Policy and Planning Committee, Public Awareness Committee, Continuum of Care (COC) Committee.

The chair of each Standing Committee must be a voting member of the Council.

Each Standing Committee, except the Executive and Nominating Committees shall have responsibility for appointing additional committee members who may or may not be voting members of the Council. Each of the standing committees, with the exception of the Executive Committee, shall elect their own chair.

❖ *Executive Committee*

The Executive Committee shall consist of a chair, vice chair of the Council and seven additional members.

The chair of the Council shall serve as the chair of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee shall be responsible for reviewing and making recommendations for amendments or changes to Governance Charter.

The Executive Committee shall carry out the business of the Council between regularly scheduled Council meetings.

❖ *Nominating*

The nominating committee consists of six members, three of whom shall be agency director members and three of whom shall be general public members. The chairperson shall also be a voting member.

A majority of the members of the nominating committee shall constitute a quorum. Any action taken by the nominating committee must be adopted by an affirmative vote of a majority of its members.

The nominating committee shall nominate persons for chair, vice-chair, and secretary of the Iowa Council for consideration by the entire Council.

The nominating committee shall be responsible for soliciting, and reviewing applications for Council membership, including from sponsoring organizations when appropriate, and making recommendations for membership on the Council.

The nominating committee shall provide information and guidance to potential applicants to execute the electronic nomination process through the office of the Governor of Iowa.

Confirmation of an individual member or of a slate nominated by the committee will normally take place at the regular meetings, but may be called at another date at the discretion of the chair, if the regular meeting date is unduly distant.

This confirmation of new member(s) supports recommendation of the candidates to the Iowa Governor's office for final confirmation and appointment to the Iowa Council

❖ ***Public Awareness***

The public awareness committee shall be responsible for increasing the public's awareness about homelessness in Iowa.

The Committee will coordinate with state and local organizations to promote homeless awareness events and campaigns.

The Committee will promote and encourage the use of relevant CoC planning documents and the most recent data to develop press releases, web based information, printed materials and presentations.

❖ ***Policy & Planning***

Shall be responsible for development of a comprehensive strategy to address homelessness in Iowa and determine an annual action plan to support the strategy. The Committee shall report at each Council meeting on the progress of the annual action plan.

Each September, the committee shall propose to the Council a slate of legislative and administrative recommendations, which may impact homelessness.

After Council approval, the committee shall coordinate the transmittal of the approved legislative agenda to the Governor's office to support policy development on homeless issues.

❖ ***Research & Analysis***

The Research and Analysis Committee shall be responsible for facilitating the collection of demographic data on homelessness in Iowa and anecdotal information on causes of homelessness in Iowa.

The committee will regularly monitor agency participation and bed coverage for Iowa's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and develops and implements a plan to keep participation rates at a minimum of 80% across program types.

The committee shall oversee, working in coordination with the Lead Agency for the HMIS network in Iowa, the completion of the annual Point in Time count and collection of data for the Housing Inventory Chart to be reported to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The committee, working in coordination with the Lead Agency for the HMIS network in Iowa will provide an annual report on the number of persons and households experiencing homelessness or near homelessness in Iowa to the Council for approval and shall coordinate transmittal of the approved report to the Governor's Office.

The committee may engage in other relevant research projects that help to inform policy and practice regarding services to persons experiencing homelessness or housing instability.

❖ ***Continuum of Care Committee***

The Continuum of Care (CoC) committee shall assist in the development and maintenance of a statewide continuum of care to end homelessness.

The committee shall, on an annual basis, participate in the development of the Balance of State's Continuum of Care Consolidated Application to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for funding under Continuum of Care Program.

Development of this Continuum of Care Consolidated Application will include, but not limited to:

- Planning and execution of the competitive CoC project application process;
- Regular evaluation of current CoC project grantees;
- Determination of project performance standards and benchmarks;
- Strategic planning around funding priorities and provision of recommendations on those funding priorities to the full Council.

The committee shall also work to support the development of local homeless coordinating and planning in communities and regions throughout the state.

Roles/Responsibilities: Iowa Council on Homelessness

❖ *Strategic Planning*

Develop a process for evaluating state policies, programs, statutes, and rules to determine whether any state policies, programs, statutes, or rules should be revised to help prevent and alleviate homelessness.

Evaluate whether state agency resources could be more efficiently coordinated with other state agencies to prevent and alleviate homelessness.

Work to develop a coordinated and seamless service delivery system to prevent and alleviate homelessness.

Work with existing resources to identify and prioritize efforts to prevent persons from becoming homeless and to eliminate factors that keep people homeless.

❖ *Agenda/Advocacy*

Work to identify causes and effects of homelessness and increase awareness among policy makers and the general public.

Advise the governor's office, the Iowa Finance Authority, state agencies, and private organizations on strategies to prevent and eliminate homelessness.

Make annual recommendations to the governor regarding matters which impact homelessness on or before September 15th of each year

Plan and implement an annual event at the Iowa capital to provide education and guidance on issues and policy effecting homelessness and housing instability.

Annually review the Iowa Administrative Rule of the Iowa Council on Homelessness for any needed updates or revisions.

Prepare and file with the Governor and the General Assembly an annual report on homelessness in Iowa.

❖ *Performance Standards*

Identify performance standards for agencies and programs providing services to Iowans who are experiencing homelessness or are near homeless that are consistent with Federal and State requirements.

Establish benchmarks that will allow effective evaluation of these performance standards on an ongoing basis over time.

Determine and implement policies and procedures to deal with poor performing agencies.

❖ ***Continuum of Care Grant Process***

Develop funding priorities for the Continuum of Care grant program and implement those priorities through funding decisions.

Execute regular evaluation of current Continuum of Care project grantees.

Plan and implement the competitive CoC project application process in coordination with the collaborative applicant – Iowa Finance Authority.

❖ ***Emergency Solutions Grant***

Consult with the Iowa Finance Authority to develop recommendations for funding priorities for the Emergency Solutions Grant program.

**Roles/Responsibilities: Collaborative Applicant
(Iowa Finance Authority)**

❖ ***Administrative Functions***

Provide staff support for scheduling meetings, collecting and distributing minutes, and ensuring compliance with open meeting requirements.

The collaborative applicant shall design a collaborative process for the development of an application for the annual CoC grant competition.

❖ ***Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)***

The Iowa Finance Authority (collaborative applicant) serves as the Iowa State ESG grantee. In this role, IFA will design and execute the application process for the ESG program, administer the ESG grant program, and oversee fiscal and performance monitoring of all ESG grantees. According to the requirements of the ESG Interim Rule, published December 5, 2011, IFA will consult with all CoCs in the state in the following three areas:

- Allocation of resources (both by type of activity and geographic distribution).
- Development of performance standards for, and evaluating outcomes of, projects and activities assisted by ESG funds, including how well sub recipients succeed in: (1) targeting those who need the assistance most; (2) reducing the number of people living on the streets or emergency shelters; (3) shortening the time people spend homeless; and (4) reducing participants' housing barriers or housing stability risks.
- Development of funding, policies, and procedures for operating and administering the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) in which sub recipients are required to participate.

❖ ***Continuum of Care Program (CoC) Grant***

The collaborative applicant shall design a collaborative process for the development and submission of the Consolidated Application for the annual CoC grant competition, and coordinate with the Iowa Council on Homelessness to evaluate applications submitted and determine CoC grant awards.

The collaborative applicant will also provide administration to support the CoC completion of the registration process and composition and submission of the CoC's Grant Inventory Worksheet.

❖ ***Consolidated Plan Coordination***

The Iowa Finance Authority will follow the requirements for consultation in support of the Consolidated Plan, according to CFR 91.110(b) Consultation; States. Specifically, this entails the following:

When preparing the portions of the Consolidated Plan describing the State's homeless strategy and the resources available to address the needs of homeless persons (particularly chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans and their families, and unaccompanied youth) and persons at risk of homelessness, the State will consult with: (1) Each Continuum of Care within the state; (2) Public and private agencies that address housing, health, social services, victim services, employment, or education needs of low-income individuals and families; of homeless individuals and families, including homeless veterans; youth; and/or of other persons with special needs; (3) Publicly funded institutions and systems of care that may discharge persons into homelessness (such as health-care facilities, mental health facilities, foster care and other youth facilities, and corrections programs and institutions); and (4) Business and civic leaders.

Roles/Responsibilities: HMIS Lead Iowa Institute for Community Alliances

❖ ***Operate CoC Homeless Management Information System***

The Iowa Institute for Community Alliances will operate all aspects of the Homeless Management Information System for the Balance of State – Iowa.

- **Data and Technical Standards Compliance**

IICA will ensure that this operation will be in compliance with the HMIS Data and Technical Standards (69 FR 146, March 10, 2010). IICA will review this compliance on an annual basis and report to the Iowa Finance Authority and the Iowa Council on the review results with any corrective action if it is required.

- **HMIS Policies/Procedures**

IICA will maintain comprehensive HMIS operational policies and procedures,

including but not limited to; privacy plan, security plan and data quality plan. These policies and procedures will be reviewed by IICA for any needed updates annually.

- **Training and Technical Assistance**

IICA will provide regular and ongoing training and technical assistance and support to all homeless system agencies engaged in use of the HMIS network.

- **Monitor System Participation/Data Quality Performance**

IICA will monitor regularly the number of homeless system agencies utilizing the network and report the percentages to the Research and Analysis Committee and CoC Committees of the Iowa Council on Homelessness. IICA will work collaboratively with the Iowa Council to develop a plan to address low participation rates if it becomes necessary to do so. IICA will support the efforts of the Iowa Council to ensure the fullest HMIS participation possible.

❖ **Reporting/Analysis**

- **Performance Outcomes Reporting (CoC Wide/ Individual Program)**

IICA will coordinate a collaborative effort of the Iowa Council and the Iowa Finance Authority to design a performance outcomes report, consistent with the expectations of the HEARTH Act, as well as newly developed reporting requirements. This report will be delivered to the Iowa Council and Iowa Finance Authority on a quarterly basis and will include and annual, year-end analysis.

- **Annual Homeless Assessment Report**

IICA will manage the collection of all data elements required for the Annual Homeless Assessment Report and enter the data as required into the HUD Homeless Data Exchange on behalf of the CoC. IICA will provide a report of the data to the next full Iowa Council meeting following final submission to HUD.

- **Required Program Reports**

CoC – Annual Performance Report

PATH – Annual Performance Report

HOPWA – Consolidated Annual Performance & Evaluation Report

ESGP – To be determined performance outcomes reports

SSVF - Regular data uploads to VA data registry

- **Point-In-Time**

As the HMIS lead, IICA will manage the collection of HMIS point in time related data collection, street count collection training and coordinate final reporting of required data into the Homeless Data Exchange to HUD. IICA will report to the Iowa Council on the results of the count at the next full Council meeting following the final submission to HUD.

- **Housing Inventory Report**

IICA will coordinate and collect all housing inventory data on behalf of the Balance of State CoC and enter the relevant data into HUD's Homeless Data Exchange. IICA will report to the Iowa Council on the current inventory at the next full Council meeting following the final submission to HUD.